

their democratically elected leaders, would legally constitute secession. Many of these activities, such as Constitutional reform and popular referenda, are the mainstay of any democracy. Yet the Chinese would use them as a legal excuse for a military attack.

Mr. Speaker, this proposed "anti-secession" legislation which the National People's Congress plans to take up in March, is a significant and dangerous development. It goes far beyond the usual bellicose verbal threats of Chinese leaders. It would use Chinese national law as a rationale for military aggression against its democratic neighbor.

The United States, for more than 25 years since the passage of the Taiwan Relations Act, has made clear its determination that the future of Taiwan must be decided only by peaceful means, not by force of arms, and that any final determination must be in accord with the wishes of the people of Taiwan.

These are the fundamental building blocks upon which the future of the Taiwan Strait must rest: peace, and mutual consent between both sides. I urge the leadership of the PRC to put aside this ill-considered law as inimical to both peace and goodwill.

ADMINISTRATION'S BUDGET CUTS
TO AMTRAK

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I wish to discuss the Administration's proposed budget cuts to Amtrak.

I want to be clear from the very beginning: if the Administration's proposed cuts go into effect, Amtrak will not survive. And, in many cases, the millions of people who depend on Amtrak's services will be left with no reliable means of rail transportation. This would result in a serious problem for rail passengers, and represents a tremendous misjudgment by this Administration.

The Administration has made clear its position on Amtrak. The result of their cuts to Amtrak would "lead to the elimination of operations." I am concerned that the "elimination of operations" would result in a significant hardship for the people of southern West Virginia, and Amtrak riders everywhere.

Practically speaking, the millions of passengers who depend on Amtrak's services would be stranded. Those who can afford a car or plane ticket would descend on our already heavily congested roads and airports. Those without the means to purchase an airline ticket or pay for the ever-increasing price of gasoline—and those in rural communities without direct access to airline or highway travel—would be left twisting in the wind.

In West Virginia alone, Amtrak served nearly 51,000 passengers in 2004. Two of the largest cities in the 3rd Congressional District, Huntington and Hinton, represent nearly half that total with nearly 24,000 riders. In addition, Amtrak pumped \$3.7 million into the state's economy—which helped foster job creation and economic development opportunities for West Virginians. The economic impact of Am-

trak on my state, and states throughout the country, cannot be overlooked.

Importantly, Amtrak is making great strides to improve itself from within. Capital investment is up substantially; a new and detailed five-year plan has been developed; unprofitable services have been eliminated; and significant overhauls and needed maintenance operations have been undertaken. And Amtrak's ridership has, and continues to, increase.

I urge this House, this Congress and this Administration to recognize the improvements Amtrak is making, the need Amtrak fills for millions of Americans and the importance of Amtrak on America's transportation infrastructure.

IN MEMORY OF MAGDALENO
DUENAS

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the life of Magdaleno Duenas, a World War II military hero who passed away on February 27 at the age of 90.

We honor and thank him for his courageous military service and the sacrifices he made for our nation, as well as his lifelong struggle on behalf of Filipino veterans of World War II. His life is a symbol of the struggle for total recognition of Filipino veterans and a sad reminder of a shameful page in the history of our nation.

Born and raised in the Philippines, Mr. Duenas joined the 101st Infantry in 1941. In 1943, he joined the guerilla forces in the mountains and was captured by the Japanese while procuring food for American soldiers. Under questioning, Mr. Duenas denied any knowledge of the whereabouts of the American soldiers. He escaped, and helped 10 U.S. soldiers escape the Japanese POW camp.

Mr. Duenas came to the United States to claim his U.S. citizenship and military benefits, and fell into the hands of an abusive landlord in Richmond, Calif. He and 16 other veterans were held in captivity, beaten, chained and fed dog food, while their landlord kept their monthly government checks.

After being rescued, his experience received news coverage. It brought public attention to the plight of elderly Filipino veterans who came to America expecting to receive previously promised veterans' pensions for their honorable U.S. military service, but instead learned that Congress had stripped them of those benefits and recognition.

Thousands of Filipino veterans came to the U.S. seeking equity and have waited 60 years for the promise to be honored. After fighting for more than half a century for their right to U.S. citizenship, other issues related to their health and recognition remain to be addressed. Many live alone in poverty. It is a national tragedy to see our veterans suffer from neglect, despair and hopelessness.

Mr. Duenas moved to San Francisco's Tenderloin district in 1993, where he was vibrant member of our community. This diminutive,

gentle man worked tirelessly to improve the experience of Filipino Veterans in the Bay Area.

All these years, he waited for the recognition of the U.S. Government for the services he rendered during WWII. He was featured in two documentaries: Tears of Old and Second Class Citizens. He died still waiting for the full equity bill to be passed by the U.S. Congress. We will not rest until the equity bill becomes law.

Mr. Speaker, we will never forget his struggle on the frontlines of the battlefield and on the frontlines of the fight for equity for Filipino veterans. Mr. Duenas' courage and resolve moves all of us to continue the fight for justice in our country for all people.

We will never forget the sacrifices Mr. Duenas and other Filipino veterans made for our freedom. We must dedicate ourselves as a nation to ensure that America fulfills its moral obligation to those who pay the high price for our freedom.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGE
JESUS GARZA

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the important contributions of Judge Jesus Garza in Laredo, TX in my Congressional District.

Judge Jesus Garza was born and raised in Laredo. He is a product of LISD and graduated from J.W. Nixon High School in 1977. Upon graduation he enrolled at the University of Texas and earned a Bachelor of Journalism in 1981. In 1984 he received his Doctorate of Jurisprudence from the Thurgood Marshall School of Law in Houston and was licensed to practice law in the State of Texas in 1985.

Judge Garza was appointed Associate Municipal Court Judge in 1984 and served until 1985 at which time he decided to run for Justice of the Peace. He ran a successful campaign and took office in 1986 and served for 6 years.

In 1993 Judge Garza, "Chuy" as he is known to his friends, was voted into the newly created Webb County County Court at Law #2 and is presently presiding over his second term.

In 1994 Mayor Saul Ramirez appointed Judge Garza to the Economic Advisory Council and selected Co-Chairman by its members.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have this opportunity to recognize County Court of Law Judge Jesus Garza.

IN HONOR OF MARIA PLASENCIA

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Maria Plascencia, a